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ABSTRACT

Aims to produce data and information that inform California Community College (CCC) decision-makers of the: extent of variance in California's associate degree definitions and graduation requirements, and perceptions of curricular leaders regarding the variances. Associate degree definitions and graduation requirements were compiled and analyzed from the 1997-98 catalogs for the 106 institutions. The minimum number of general education units required to earn an associate degree range from the legal minimum of 18 semester units to as many as 41 units. One-third of the colleges requires freshman English composition while others accept a course one level below. Titles used for transfer general education programs are the same titles used for non-transfer or general studies programs at other colleges. A majority of leaders surveyed agreed that the CCC system should work toward developing common definitions for associate degrees. The leaders supported offering the Associate of Applied Science degree. Concludes that Associate degrees vary so significantly among the 106 campuses of the CCC system that there is no common meaning to the degree. Associate degree definitions in California have no relationship to the definitions set by the American Association of Community Colleges. Recommends that an Associate Degree Task Force be convened to study the issue and present recommendations to the CCC Board of Governors. Includes survey instrument in appendices. (Contains 73 references.) (Author/VWC)

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